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PID/ABCB 116/64

10 June 1964

Copy # _____

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, General Sciences Division, OSI

ATTENTION: [REDACTED]

THROUGH: Chief, Requirements Branch, Reconnaissance Group, CGS

FROM: Chief, CIA/PID(NPIC)

SUBJECT: Search for Mining Activity in the Lake Koko Nor Area, China

REFERENCES: Requirement No. C-SI4-81,353
CIA Project No. C 792-64

1. In response to the referenced requirement, an area encompassing a 30 nm distance north, west and east from Koko Nor was searched for mining activity and/or processing that would have a possible connection with the unidentified complex at Hsing-Lung-Chuang. Only one area (Area A) was noted in which mining operations with some processing activities were being conducted on an active basis. Several other suspect prospecting areas, all in the eastern half of the area, were also noted. Descriptions and comments on these areas are keyed on the attached map and annotated photograph, PID/ABCB/P-102/64, of the overall area surrounding the Hsing-Lung-Chuang complex. They are discussed in Paragraph 3 in greater detail.

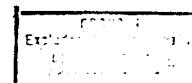
2. A combination of the latest good quality [REDACTED] photography was utilized. Following is a listing of the photo coverage:



Reviewed by NGA.

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[]
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The extreme SW corner and W edge was covered only by [] which gave complete, but non-stereo, coverage. [] passed along the eastern shoreline of Koko Nor; [] circled N of the lake approaching from the SW shoreline and returning over Hsing-Lung-Chuang. [] covered the eastern two-thirds of the area; however, the NE portion observed on mission [] was under heavy cloud cover, and much of the SE portion covered by mission [] was unusable due to camera malfunction. Several other [] missions covered the area but were of no value for a search of this nature due to partial or total cloud cover.

3. Mining activity or suspect prospecting areas in order of probable importance from photographic appearance are:

Area A (36-53N 101-14E) - an active mining camp located 18 nm east of the center of the Hsing-Lung-Chuang U/I Complex. (This is the same activity referred to in NPIC/R-93/64, page 7, of February 1964). There are at least two large workings and numerous small diggings along the La-Ch'u Ho (River). The waste tailings as seen on [] have increased greatly in size as compared to that seen on []

[] A powerline connecting Area A with the Hsing-Lung-Chuang complex was under construction in [] with approximately two-thirds of the poles in place. [] the powerline trace was complete. There is a good improved road from the camp which connects with a previously existing road in the Chung-Ko Ho valley. The unidentified complex and the mining camp are definitely road-connected, but not in a direct manner as the powerline. No attempt has been made to determine the type of mining from the photography alone. Two adjoining annotated photographs, CIA/PID/ABCB/P-103 and 104/64, show the details observed at Area A.

Area B (36-49N 100-48E) - a possible area of solution mineral recovery along an inlet of the eastern lakeshore which most nearly fits the description given in Information Report [] of 29 November 1961. However, the exploitation appears not to be anywhere near a production stage the report suggests. No leaching or treatment plant could be found that might be associated with this activity. Surface scarrings were observed on [] as striations on the beach adjacent to the road to the area. Some buildings and excavations were located behind the old strand line. The extent of these scarrings did

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not increase on [] and appeared partially destroyed by wave action. However, increased activity was noted on [] A new camp of 16 buildings was constructed directly on the beach. One larger sized building was partially surrounded by piles of material of darker color than the light colored sand. Behind this building are what appears to be two empty rectangular-shaped holding pits of considerable size. Also a mound trace of a possible localized buried pipeline extends from the first building south of the one with the foreign material around it towards a large circular hole. At right angles to this trace, what appears only as a landing for boats, is built over the water; this could conceivably be the other end of a pipeline with pumping facilities located in one of two buildings.

Immediately north, where a railway bed has been constructed, a line of seven equally spaced holes with another four holes at right angles are grouped as evidence of a drill test site. Shadows indicate at least two small rigs are present. Three trucks were observed on the road paralleling the railroad bed.

Of significance is the fact that a railroad bed has been extended to the beach which terminates on a curve paralleling the shoreline. This was added sometime between []

[] The last 11 miles (approximate) of track are not laid as of [] The completed rail line ends 2 miles west of the small town of Hai-yen, immediately west of a railroad loading point and switching yard, complete with a turning wye for trains coming from Hsi-ning. This facility was built concurrently with the build-up at the Hsing-Lung-Chuang complex. The turning wye must be used in order to rail serve Hsing-Lung-Chuang. When the tracks are completed, the lakeshore activity will have direct access to Hsing-Lung-Chuang without the use of the turning wye. Therefore, the evidence points to a potential lakeshore build-up, possibly based on some discovery.

Area C (37-12N 100-43E) - an area containing three large trench-like cuts as shown on the enlarged photo, FID/ABCB/P-106/64. It appears that material has been physically removed; there is no sign of usage or processing within the area. The road connects with the main NW-SE road leading to Hsing-Lung-Chuang, but not much importance can be placed on these features; they were seen clearly on [] of [] with little or no change on later coverage.

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Area D (37-38N 100-33E) - a small suspect prospecting area, in which a trench has been dug along a hillside (see photo PID/ABCB/P-107/64). Holes observed also in this area appear to be the ruins of two small structures. A similar trench on the edge of a ridge is located 6 nm SE of this area. The coordinates for Area D nearly coincide with those given in DIA Report, Special Area Analysis, Area II, North Central China, SAO/PC 305/2-1-63, page 76, where a referenced source listed resources of oil shale for this area.

4. Elsewhere, numerous trenches and scarred areas were observed along the Chung-ko Ho valley. These appear to be for other than mining purposes because of their random occurrence, and can be explained as borrow areas for construction material. In addition to the Hsing-Lung-Chuang complex and railroad, an extensive canal system for irrigation is being built. An area where quarrying material seemingly is being brought is located just north of Hai-yen. There are two high stacks associated with two elongated buildings; it possibly is a brick factory with the two long buildings containing the kilns. Of academic interest is another odd feature appearing on ice-covered Koko Nor on [REDACTED] an unusual interlocking polygon pattern covering a portion of the lake but not extending to the land surface was observed on the ice. The pattern apparently was formed by a series of equally spaced holes; it was concluded this must be a method of ice fishing. The activity on the south shore of the lake with a landing built into the water appear to be a small fishing village; small boats were observed adjacent to the landing. The ditch scar in the background is typical all along the shoreline and is not new. (see Photo PID/ABCB/P-109/64). Another activity on the south shore adjacent to a sand spit, 36-37N 100-32E, presently appears to be of little consequence. Some digging along a trench is apparent. Also the road leading to the end of the spit has an increased number of vehicles or huts at its tip on the last coverage (see Photo PID/ABCB/P-108/64).

5. The photo analyst on this project was [REDACTED] who may be contacted on extension [REDACTED] should you have further questions regarding the requirement. This memorandum with enclosures completes the referenced requirement.

Enclosures:

CIA/PID/ABCB/P-101/64 (Loc
CIA/PID/ABCB/P-102/64 thru
Total of 2 Enclosures

LOCATION MAP - KOKO NOR, CHINA

Area D

Area C

Center U/I Complex
Hsing Lung Chiang

Area A

Area B

Fishing Village

AREA OF SEARCH

CHING HAI
(KOKO NOR)

Tah-o-ni

Yagwan Hsu

Dabbs
Hsu
Yung

TOP SECRET

25X1

KOKO NOR, CHINA
AREA D

TRENCH

RUINS

2

KA

TOP SECRET

VICINITY OF KEDD ROR, CHINA

HSING-LUNG-CHIANG COMPLEX

POWERLINE

BORROW PITTS

POWERLINE

RR KED U.C

BRICK FACTORY

AREA A

ROAD

END OF TRACK

RR TURNING WYE

TOP SECRET

2

SECRET

TOP SECRET

VICINITY OF KORD KOR, CHINA

HSING-LING-CHIANG COMPLEX

PONCHIALE

BORROW PITS

FOR RED U.C.

BRICK FACTORY

AREA D

END OF TRACK

ROAD

FOR TURNING WYE

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